

Secrets of Parenting Podcasts

Karen DeBord, Ph.D.
Professor & Extension Specialist, Child Development
North Carolina Cooperative Extension

Podcast 1

Hello, this is Karen DeBord and today we will be talking about Secrets of Parenting...those little tidbits that will help you as a parent to connect with your child and information that will help you build a relationship with your child.

So often, we as parents wonder why our children won't just grow up and not bother us. We put them in front of the television and sometimes don't even pay attention to them. But what are the risks if we simply don't know some information about their development?

Let me start by asking you a question. This is sort of like a quiz so I will give you three answers to choose from:

If you are having a bad day and yell at your children for no reason:

- a. you should never apologize so your children don't view you as weak.
- b. you believe children should learn to stay out of their parents' way
- c. you should apologize for yelling so your children will have a good model to follow.

Let's talk about these answers.

a. you should never apologize so your children don't view you as weak.
Children need to know you have a plan, will protect them and that they are safe with you. Apologizing is good modeling for a skill you want them to learn...it is a part of kindness and understanding.

B .you believe children should learn to stay out of their parents' way
Send a message you are approachable not scary. You can set clear boundaries if you have had a bad day but in generally, be approachable.

If you answered "C" then you were correct. You should apologize for yelling so your children will have a good model to follow.
Apologizing is good modeling for a skill you want them to learn...it is a part of kindness and understanding.

Let's try another one.

Rules are made so children

- a. will learn how they are supposed to act and behave at home and in school.
- b. will follow them without questioning them.
- c. will learn who is boss.

What do you think? The correct answer is A.

- a. Children will learn how they are supposed to act and behave at home and in school.

However children do not begin to understand or comprehend how rules really work until about 5-7 years old. For example, playing a card game with children before they have a grasp of rules is hard since they don't get it. About all you can do is separate the cards into red and black. Rules are balanced with freedom and understanding when a rule is not in order and discussion is.

If you thought the right answer was

b. will follow them without questioning them. Hmmm

This is a hard call. That is because many adults think children should simply mind. But we need to help them understand how to be approachable and help children learn when to ask questions for clarity of misunderstanding. Wonder if a babysitter tells them something unsafe or something that will not be acceptable. Are ALL adults always right? They have to learn to think and problem solve when their parents are not around too.

The of course for response C....that children will learn who is boss.

Is the objective power and being "boss?" Can children have a say in their own rules? Then when they break them, also a say in their own consequences? Rules are not about power, but about learning socially acceptable behaviors.

The important thing is to create a connection with your child. And that is the "secret" to parenting! This is Karen DeBord with North Carolina Cooperative Extension.